SOME NEW BOOKS. A French Study of Russia

by Mr. Mackenzie Wallace, there has been no first-hand investigation of Russia's political and social system at all comparable with the work of M. Anatole Leroy-Braulieu, entitled The Empire of the Crars and the Dussians (Putnam's). The original narrative consists of three large octavo volumes, each containing some six hundred pages. The first of these is devoted to "the country and people," the second to the "institutions," and the third to "religion" and church matters. It is an English translation of the first of these volumes which is now brought out by the Put-nams, the two parts needed to complete the work not being yet ready for publication. The translator, ZENAIDE A. RAGOZIN, has condensed many passages of the original. in order to find space for a large number of foot notes and appendices introduced for the purpose of discussing some questions at more length, of elucidating cortain historical allusions, and sometimes of presenting objections to the author's concluilons. It should be mentioned that, although M. Lercy Beaulien evinces a lively sympathy with the great Slavic people and sincers respect for its sovereign, the circulation of his ook, or of a translation of it, is prohibited in Russia. That is because the author, although even more friendly to Russia than was Mackenzle Wallace, discusses the acts and principles of the Government with a freedom incompatible with an autocratic system. It is to be noted as characteristic of the book, that the political system of Russia is not denounced merely because it is autocratic. There have n periods of European history, stages in the evolution of European civilization, at which autoeracy was perhaps the best practicable form of government. The keynote of this work is the demonstration that Russian empire, although a European and Christian State, really belongs not to modern Europe, but to a Europe of another age. The Czar Alexander III. is not so much the contemporary of Queen Victoria as of Queen Isabella of Castille. If. at the distance of four centuries, the Russian sovereign takes against his Jewish subjects measures which recall the edicts issued in 1492 by the Catholic kings, it is because Orthodox Russia is not unlike Catholic Spain of the fifteenth century. Between "Holy Russia and the democratic republies and constitutional monarchies of the West, there really lies an interval of several hundred years. What makes it hard for ordinary tourists to understand Russia is that, modern as she is If we look merely to the external side of her dvilization, and to all that she has appropriated of our mechanical sciences, she is medisval still in the manners and spirit of her people. The Eussian masses, urban or rural. have not felt the breath of either the Renaissance, the Reformation, or the Revolution.

About one-half of the volume here translated is allotted to a description of the physiography, climate, and soil of Russia; to a review of the various races which inhabit the region between the Ural and the Vistula, and to a summary of the country's history and elements of civilization. Again, in some ninety pages, the author traverses the ground which had already been carefully explored by Mackenzie Wallace for the purpose of making an spendent study of the village communities nd their methods of tilling the soil on communistic or socialistic principles. As we cannot attempt to glance at more than two or three of the many topics considered in this volme, we have selected the chapters that deal with the national temperament and character.

Russia is undoubtedly one of the countries where the physical surroundings have pro-duced the most considerable and manifest effeets upon man. The whole of the region which has been the cradle of the great Russian copie, and which formed the nucleus of ansient Museovy. Hes north of the fiftieth degree of northern latitude. There, besides Novgorod and Pakof, the two semi-republican cities, are to be found all the former capitals of the Russian kniazes, or princely descendants of Rurik. That part of the country is essentially continental, colder than Petersburg, with greater extremes of climate, the average winter temperature being from 13° to 14° below that of Paris. Setting aside Scandinavia and Scotand, oth of which are warmed by the nearness of 'vo seas, this is the only region of the earth that has a sedentary agricultural populaon in such close proximity to the polar circle Remote as it is from any sea, as well as from the equator, it is only thanks to the lack of elethat it is inhabitable at the effect of such a climate on the life and body of man must be enormous, but it has never been expounded with scientific preetsion. We know, indeed, that the general of feet of cold upon vegetable or animal life is to roduce numbness, sometimes even suspen sion of the vital energies. The sap stops soursing in plants; the blood congulates in the veins of animals. Many of the latter hibernate in a state of somnolence, and during the very coldest months lie down in temporary graves. If man escapes this deathlike lethargy. is as much by force of his industry and civilization as by his constitution. sluggishness which is so generally observed throughout sub-Arctic regions. It is true that Montesquien considered the north to be the home of activity, courage, and liberty. Our author would not dispute the correctness of this theory, so far as moderately cold countries are concerned; but he submits that extreme cold in the north produces effects analogous to those of extreme heat in the south, a period of partial hibernation in the lands lying near the poles, corresponding to the sleep of summer slestas in tropical countries. Stimulating to the lungs and conducive to general activity as long as it keeps within certain limits, cold becomes depressive as soon as reaches too low a degree or lasts too long. It then disposes to a certain indolence, physical and moral, to a sort of passiveness of mind and oul. To the excitement of the first frosts succoods the torpor brought on by intense and

There is, moreover, in the north, besides the direct action of cold upon the organs, another thing which places labor under conditions less lavorable than those of temperate countries. We refer to the violent alternation and opposition between the seasons. Buckle noticed that nations living under high latitudes did not show the same taste for labor, the same energy as those living un fer gentler skies. He attributed this defect to the interruption caused by winter, which, by the rigor of its weather and the shortness of its days. breaks every year for months the sequeñce of agricultural pursuits. "Why sleepest thou, Majik?" says a popular seg, in which the peasant is reproved for sleeping all day on top of the stove, while Want comes and sits down at his door. If he sleeps, it is because his crops have been taken in, the autumn sowing is done, and the snow has come, so that there is no more work for him in the fields. This intermittence of labor causes a certain desultoriness and instability which interfere with persistency and regular habits. The north, in a word, throws peular obstacles in the way of agricultural in Tries by making them dependent on a clinot impossible, but probable, that these full-

ings may extend to the character. It is certain that foreigners who have had work done in Russia assert that Russians, like southerners, are more capable of a vigorous urt of energy than of continuous, steady offort. With more vivacity-which is, perhaps, an inheritance of his Slavie blood-the Rus sian commonly displays less activity than the northerners of Teutonic races; in the lower as well as in the higher classes he shows less taste for bodily exercise. He seems to like it only in the shape of fast sleighing and driving, which, however, may be accounted for by the long distances, and the cold that

and violent games are scarcely more attractive to these sons of the north than they are to the medern nations of the south. Even skating is less in favor than in countries where Since the publication of the well-known book there is less of it to be had. In this respect, as in many another, the Russian is pronounced the very opposite of the Englishman. Travellors have repeatedly been struck with the disinclination of Russian peasants to physical exertion; at their numerous festivals their chief delight seems to be rest and immobility

But, although climate and race must have had something to do with this impassiveness of mind and body, our author contends that the people's diet must also be held responsible for it in large measure. As the principal physiological effect of cold is to accelerate respiration, and thus determine in the lungs and blood a more rapid combustion, it follows that more substantial nourishment is needed in sub-Arctic countries. The nearer we are to the pole the more does man require food rich in earbon and nitrogen. Now, in the extreme north, as one consequence of the cold itself. the fertility of the soil is rarely in proportion with the demands of the climate. Nowhere is the disproportion more obvious than in the northern half of Russia, which is unsuited to the growth of wheat, and which is beset by such obstacles to cattle raising as are unknown to temperate climates. Throughout this region the earth is niggard in granting to man the food distinctly ndicated by climatological conditions: the people have been condemned for many centuries to a meagre and almost exclusively vegetable fare. Under a sub-Arctic sky, they have lived as people do in the south. Only in our own day has the use of meat, bacon, and even salt pork begun to gain ground among them. To this hour, although great progress has been made in this direction since the emencipation of the serfs, the majority of peasants taste meat only on holidays. Their staple food consists of rye bread, broken into the shishi, a sort of soup made of fermented sour cabbage, this latter dish being the national one par excellence. To these edibles are added dried mushrooms and frozen or salted fish, two articles that are nowhere consumed in such quantitles as in Russia. Nevertheless, the demands of the climate

ould not be entirely evaded, and drink has

had to supply the lack of food. The Russians

have two national beverages, kvass, a sort of

rye water, slightly formented, and tea, the use

of which is well nigh as universal as in China.

The tea kettle, the brass samovar, is always

the chief utensil of a household; no hut, be it

ever so poor, is without it. Tea, especially in

a country where the water is frequently of

poor quality, is a great refreshment; but, under

a sub-Arctle sky, it is insufficient as a tonic. It is supplemented with grain whiskey, the pale white vodka. It has long been noticed that drunkenness increases with the degrees of latitude. The taste for alcohol is as natural to the Russlan peasant as perance is to the Sicilian or Andalusinn; it is not so much the man's vice as the climate's fault. As long as the fare is not better, whiskey will be to the peasant a tonic and stimulant, unwholesome doubtless but difficult to replace. What the author would most deplore is not that rodka cannot be entirely proscribed, but that it is impossible to regulate the use of it, so that on a "spreday" one beholds; the absorption of such quantitles of alcohol as, wisely dealt out, might further the peasant's health, instead of tending to degrade him into a brute. It is satisfactory, however, to learn from M. Leroy Beaulieu, than whom no foreign observer has made a more careful study of Russia, that the intemperance of the Czar's subjects has been greatly exaggerated. The Russian drinks less than the Dane, and perhaps less than the Englishman, the German, and the Frenchman. Many peasants who get drunk on every holiday, go for weeks without a drop of spirits. Indeed. the consumption of vodka had noticeably diminished during the second half of the reign of Alexander II., partly owing, no doubt, to the increased excise duties, but partly also to the moral upraising of the former serfs. Unquestionably, drunkenness still remains one of the plague spots of Russia, yet it is certhat the peasants are not always deal to the preachings of the apostles of temperance. When Alexander II. was murdered. several villages are known to have closed their taprooms in token of mourning for the "lib erator." In former times, such doings would not have been viewed favorably by the Government, from the fear of letting a most boun tiful source of revenue run dry. In truth, the tax on the nutional vice brings in every year over two hundred and fifty million rubles or nearly a quarter of the entire national venue, so that he who said that Russia paid her debts by getting drunk was not far wrong It was calculated in 1882 that the Russians spent five hundred, million roubles yearly on whiskey, the real value of which did not excoed fifty millions, the profit being divided between the liquor sellers and the Government. these days, however, the Government,

although it is the party most interested in the

sale of vodka, has spared no efforts to free the

peasant from the bondage of drunkenness. One

of the first acts of Alexander III. was the con-

vocation of a sort of temperance parliament.

Such a diet as we have described in such a climate as that of the northern half of Russia would be expected to exert a deplorable influence on health, and even on the duration of The effects are apparent in the statistics of the country. Here, however, we encounter one of those anomalies which seem characteristic of Russia. This is unquestionably one of the countries where mortality is highest and the average of life shortest. Yet it is also one of those where we find the most numerous cases of longevity and where human life attains its uttermost limits. This incongruity is especially striking in the northern regions. In the Government of Novgorod, for instance out of a population of one million souls there died in one year (1871) thirty persons a hundred years old or older. a fact which presupposes the existence of others of the same age. Side by side, nevertheless, with this phenomenon, the number of persons who pass their thirty-fifth year is in all Russia proportionately lower than in France, while those who have passed their sixtleth year are only half as numerous. It is especially upon the children that mortality descends. Under such a sky the apprentice-ship to life is harder; the child needs more care, yet the care cannot be easily afforded. Delicate infants are doomed; only the stronger ones survive to be subjected to an ordeal which. every year, is fatal to many. They undergo at the hand of death a series of siftings which successively eliminate the weaklings, until only the robust are left for life and reproduction It might be inferred that, in a population aub ected to this kind of continuous natural selection, a vigorous temperament would be common thing. This, however, is far from be ing the case. Although the Russian people are conspicuous for high statures and frequent longevity, their strength is often more ap parent than real. The climate which, in a few years, corrodos granite, proves in the long run exceedingly debilitating and depressing. The lymphatic temperament prevails in Eussia. Scrofula is habitual. Contagious diseases are common, easy to take, and difficult to cure, is most to be dreaded is not the severe frosts, nor even the great contrast between the rigor of winter and the blazing heat of summer; it is rather the intermediar seasons, with their abrupt and violent variations of temperature. In this climatic insta-bility all epidemics find favorable conditions, aggravated by insufficient nourishment. It is

terrible ravages.

To the debilitating influences of the climate are added habits tending to intensity the nermake it desirable to get to one's destination wous sensibilities. The precautions enforced sion as quickly as, possible. Athletics by the cold are unhealthy. To resist the win-

true that, owing to the greater dryness of the

atmosphere, lung diseases are less prevalent than they are in England. On the other hand.

small-pox, typhoid fever, puerperal fever, and diphtheria break out periodically amid the

ill-fed, ill-sheltered populations, and commit

atmosphere rarely purified by an influx of the outer air. To protect themselves against excessive cold they must accumulate beforehand a reserve fund of warmth, and fabricate in the house with the help of hermetically sealed stoves an artificial climate almost as bot as summer is in the south of Europe. The lower the temperature out of doors, the higher it must be made indoors. Behind their double windows, calked with oakum and putty for the entire season, city folks convert their apart nents into hothouses, where they breathe the same air as the tropical plants with which they love to decorate their dwellings. In his itbe or log cabin, frequently surround ed with a rampart of manure, the peasant and his whole family growd around the huge oven on top of which they all sleep at night. Out of this enervating atmosphere people must every day emerge into the ley outdoor air, and so they go continually during several month pack and forth from house to street, although there is a difference of between 40° and 50 between the two temperatures. Again, the climate is hardly more favorable to cleanligess than it is to health. The houses, every chink of which is studiously closed, are not easily kept clean. The stoves cannot purify the air of the room because they do not open into them. Well-to-do families remedy this inconvenience by the size of the apartments. which open into one another, and by the frequent burning of perfumes. The peasant is condemned to live in a stifling atmosphere, replete with miasmatic influences. The warm and infected air of his cabin engenders myrlads of insects; the result is that his hab Itation teems with all kinds of vermin. Out of doors the filth thrown out around the house vanishes under the snow, only to reappear with unimpaired fetidity in the spring. Ever in the cities the refuse is not always carried away by the sewers, for these are often shut off by ice; on the first warm days it fills the streets with pernicious exhalations. Nothing can equal the stench of a thaw in a Russian city. The snow, which, under the sleigh's run ners, seemed like sand or pounded glass, is transformed into a thick, nauseous slush, Under such sanitary conditions it is not to be wondered at that the people should fall an easy prey to every epidemic. For the common people the necessity of keeping the body well covered is an obstacle to cleanliness, as well as to hygiene. The pensant sleeps in his clothes ives night and day in the same sheepskin. It s true that he takes a vapor bath every Saturday as an act of ritualistic purification. After the bath, however, he is compelled to get into the same clothes, teeming as they are with vermin. It is further obvious that the Russian climate does not favor refinement, even if it cannot positively be said to promote immor-There is no doubt that the great num ber and precocity of marriages diminish the proportion of illegitimate children; our author declines, nevertheless, to accept this as trustworthy gauge of popular purity. It must, at all events, be conceded that the crowding of a family within one room and the practice of sleeping in common on top of the broad stoves are not conditions conducive to the sanctity of domestic life. So. too, the custom of bathing in common, even though the sexes are now kept strictly separate, may have tended to generate in the peasant a certain coarseness. In both sexes. decency seems less strictly observed than in the West; modesty is less easily alarmed, both men and women appearing to take less thought of nudity. In summer, along the rivers, it is not unusual, especially on Saturday, to see girls and women with no garment of

the most frequented bridges. On some of the points here mentioned it is well to hear what the translator has to say by way of qualification in appendices, for she is naturally zealous to defend her countrymen against the criticism even of a friendly observer where it seems to her too severe. She admits that during the Lenten seasons-which in Russia include not only the forty days known as Lant to Catholics, but three analogous periods, amounting to ten weeks in all-the Russian people rigorously abstain from all animal food, under which head are included milk, butter, and eggs, as well as every kind of meat. Nevertheless, she contends that the palate is as frequently the gainer as the loser by confinement o Lenten fare. It is, we are assured ast nishing how far mushrooms will go as a substitute for meat. There are in Russia a dozen edible varieties, all of them wholesome and nourishing, and some ranking with the choicest licacies. To dry, preser and pickle these is a matter of vital moment to the poor; their prospects for the winter would be dark indeed but for the chaplets of little, shrivelled, leatherlike blackish morsels strung up along the raft ers of the izha, sked out with a few strings of onions and, down in the cellar, with a heap of the huge, black-skinned, terribly strong radishes, which are half way between the pink and white table radish and the pungent horseradish. Green hemp-seed oil is a staple article of consumption among the poor, and, eaten in conjunction with the black radish just mentioned, it is relished as an acquired taste by many a blase palate. Other oils as rape seed and especially sunflower oil, are pronounced very acceptable substitutes for olive oil or butter in cooking and even pastry. The fish soups of Russia are renowned, and we are told that the best of them, the steriet soup, may be compared for richness of flavor and costliness of material with the clear turtle soup for which the civic banquets of London are renowned. In desserts the place of milk and cream is taken by orgent, a substitute which every Russian woman knows how to prepare out of almonds pounded in a mortar water. The translator avers that tea and coffee whitened and flavored with almond milk or almond cream are superlatively delicious everages. After all, however, she admits

any kind disporting themselves in troops in

scarcely sheltered spots, sometimes even under

tating want of nourishment. The translator does not dispute the correct ness of the author's statement concerning the atmosphere of the izba, or peasant's cabin His strictures, however, upon the city dwellings are declared to be unfounded. It is ever maintained that the Russian method of heating houses is the only perfect one, combining. as it is said to do, the power of regulating the heat within half a degree, maintaining evenness of temperature throughout a dwelling, and assuring great economy of fuel. Even active ventilation is said to be secured by the valves in the flues, six or eight inches in diameter, by which the outer air is admitted; there are two of these by the side of each stove, and they can be opened just as far as it is desired. Ther are always wide open during the hour or two which the stove requires to consume its daily armful of wood. As to the protection afforded against the winter's cold by duplicate window frames calked all round the edges, this, it is submitted, is preferable to the only half-efficient weather strips of Western countries. In at least one window of every Russian mom there is a pane fitted with hinges. This is kept open in the morning, while the chamber work is being done, and is opened for as long as the cold allows several times in the day. It is als worth noting that, on the sill, the interval between the two window frames is filled to the neight of some three inches with sand, in which are stuck small paper cornucopias filled with coarse salt, a great absorber of moisture. Owing to all these precautions the atmosphere of a Eussian middle-class dwelling is singularly free from dampness, and, consequently, cannot be fairly called a hot-

that, for the poor, the Lenten periods are

times of increased hardship and most debili

house atmosphere. As to the alleged uncleanliness of Russians. the translator submits that a man who thoroughly washes his body once a week cannot be lescribed as very dirty. For a Russian of the lower classes it is a matter of religious duty not only to take a hot bath every Saturday. but to wash his hands before every meal. For a like ritualistic reason the table is kept

scrupulously scoured and is washed down ter the masses of the people must live in an overy time a meal is to be apread on it. The dishes, bowls, and platters are treated likewise. If the family can afford it, the table is sovered with a snow-white linen cloth, home spun and home woven. What M. Leroy-Beau lieu says about the condition of a peasant's clothing neutralizing the effects of his daily bath is not disputed by the translator, but she insists that it applies only to the very poor A well-to-do peasant family often has a bathroom of its own, and always sufficient change of raiment. In the large cities great improve ments have been made in the public baths. The most to the point is the arrangement providing for the bather's shirt and trousers being laundered and dried ready for him when he returns to the dressing room. if he has no change of clothing. There is, it ecems, a certain iron press closet in which his sheepskin is subjected to a degree of dry heat which entirely frees it from vermin. We are told that the floor of that closet seems strewn with a black powder, and must be swept out every two hours. These two items, incalcula-bly beneficial as they are, a included in the charge for the use of the bathroom—from two o five cents, according to accommodations, of which there are three grades for the people apart from the luxurious public bathrooms where the charge is from fifteen to wentyfive cents, and the private suites of three room which cost from fifty cents to two dollars.

Returning to the topic of the Russian tem

erament and character, the author of this

book points out that the direct influence of

climate on the human organism and on the physical and economical conditions of existence is neither the only nor perhaps the deepest one. Nature indirectly exerts a con siderable influence over the thoughts, the feelings and the entire character, by the passion he provokes and the faculties she calls into play. The first and most profound impression made on the observer by the physical formation of Great Russia is that life there, more than anywhere else, is a duel with nature, hand-to-hand combat against an ever-present and unvanguished foe. Under that sky man cannot, as in more temperate climes, forget his adversary. Neither can he ever completely triumph over his foe. Hence, several apparently incompatible traits of the Russian national character. The warfare with nature has been. first of all, a school of patience, resignation, submission Unable to slip his neck from under the yoke o his physical surroundings, he has borne that of man more patiently; the one has fashioned him and bent him for the other. The tyranny of climate has prepared him to submit to tyranny at the hands of man. The obect of all his strivings being bare existence. despotism has weighed upon him less. Th example of Russia proves that we cannot accent without qualification the theory of Montesquion, which described the peoples of the north as apt for freedom and those of the south as doomed to bondage. At a certain degree of latitude and in a given environment the north can bow souls as well as bodies, and only education can raise and strengthen them. The great advantage possessed by the north is that there the liberating efficiency of education may generally be counted on, whereas in tropical countries the final outcome of the struggle remains doubtful. An other quality that seems to have been devel oped by the Russian climate and the resultant trife against nature is passive courage, endurance, negative energy, the power of iner tia. Endurance has long been the popular ideal of manhood in Great Russia. This is made apparent in an old national game, a sort of rustic boxing match, in which the combat ants vied not in strength and skill, but in en durance, the victor being not he who floored his antagonist, but he who could take most hard knocks without crying out for mercy Life, at one in this respect with history, has fashioned the Great-Russian to a stoicism o which he is himself unconscious. Nobody can suffer like a Russian; no one can die like him. In the quiet courage with which he faces suffering and death there is something of the stolid resignation of the captive Indian, ennobled, however, by serene religious conviction. On this point th translator remarks in a foot note that a Russian's invoterate hatred of cant and contempt of phrases and attitudes never leaves him least of all at critical conjunctures and tragic climaxes. That is why the effective "last words" and the deliberate posings and selfdrapings with which men of other nations. even the great ones, generally think it necessary to emphasize their public acts, and espe cially the last act of all, not only do not stir

but either jar on him and put him out of patience or leave him coldly critical, with a curl of the lip not unlike a sneer. From the same strife against climate which has fashioned him for resignation and endurance the Great-Russian has derived two other traits which seem opposed to one another. It has given him a curious mixture of roughness and good nature, of insensibility and kindness. The ruggedness of the world around him, while hardening him for himself, has taught him compassion for others. He knows what it is to suffer; consequently, he can sympathize with his neighbor and succor him as much as lies within his power. Family affections, beneficence toward the poor, and pity for the unfortunate are among the most marked features of the national character. We are assured that, contrary to the opinion current in the west, the Russian under his rough shell is generally affectionate, gentle, even tender; but let him encounter an obstacle, let him engage in a struggle with an adversary, his latent ruggedness and harshness at once reveal themselves. In an unceasing struggle against a ruthless ature, he has learned to respect the laws of war, which he applies, as he endures them. with inflexibility. Here again one should not overlook a foot note, in which the translator emphasizes what the French author says. She describes the Russian's mind as intensely theoretical, and his conscience as rigid in the extreme, holding all compromises as dishonest. or, at the best cowardly. Therefore, once possessed of an idea, they go all lengths, and, therefore, too, should there ever be a Russian revolution, the horrors of the French '93 will pale before it. How. otherwise, asks the translator, could we find among the most ruthless of terrorists, ready at any moment for wholesale massacre, gentle, soft-eyed creatures that would take to their bosoms a hurt cur off the

the Russian's heart or excite

street, and go out of their way not to tread upon an insect? On the whole, the faculty which has been aroused most thoroughly in the Great-Russian by his age-long contest with a cold and implacable nature is a practical, positive spirit this is the feature by which he chiefly differs from the Little-Russian and from the western and southern Slavs. He has not, for instance. much comprehension of resistance unencour and by the hope of success. Himself accustomed to bow before fatality, he thinks it but just that other people should do so too. If he does not worship force, he at all events respects it. The same practical positive spirit which is perceptible in the people's manner and politics is no less apparent in things where it seems most out of place, such as poetry and religion. The Great-Russian popular songs show little taste for abstractions or personifications of any sort. No nation has a less metaphysical turn of mind, or takes less thought of the essence of things. A Russian's favorite studies are the physical and socia sciences. The whole nation, including the educated classes as well as the ignorant classes, is pervaded by a more or less conscious positiveness. The quality most eseemed by the peasant is common sense. He says his worst about the Pole when he terms him lacking in that quality. Indeed, the Russian's pretension to practical sense verges at upon brutality. His realistic instincts make themselves felt in literature and in all the lines of ark sotably in painting, as well as in criticiary, in history, and in philosophy. The romanticism which had its brief day, like the

tions from abroad. The national literature of Russia has for a considerable period belonged almost exclusively to realism or naturalism Of all foreign writers, the one most read and relished is Zola, who, Indeed, numbers more admirers among the Russians than among his own countrymen.

VI.

Nothing, bowever, is more complex than the character of a nation, and, therefore, after having portrayed one side of it, M. Leroy-Beaulien is careful to indicate the other, les he should produce a delusive portrait. In Russia, as elsewhere, nature not only acts on the temperament through the climate, the diet, and the habits; on the character through the needs which she imposes and the faculties which she stimulates; she acts with no less force on the imagination, and the entire soul, through the pictures she presents and the impressions she arouses. As nowhere is nature simpler, so nowhere are the impressions made by it clearer. One of the first to be perceived by the traveller is a feeling of sadness. The sadness emanates from the sky and the climate; all northern nations are more or less touched with it, in Russia the very earth, flat and monotonous, exhales it. It is in the poetry and music of the people—the folk songs which Herzen called audible tears, and the popular airs of slow rhythm and in minor keys-that the native melancholy, bred of soil and clime, finds its fullest expression. In these popular songs a cloud of wistfulness casts elegiac shades over the realistic background of the national character. In literature and cultured poetry thi sadness assumes an intenser and bittere flavor. The poetry of all the schools is im prognated with it; it has made itself felt in the life as well as in the works of Russian poets, most of whom died young and some tragically. "Sadness, skepticism, frony-these are the three chords of the Russian lyre. wrote Herzen, who added, "Our laugh is but an unwholesome grin."

The sort of melancholy inspired by the climate, and possibly by the political regime, at times inclines the Russian soul to a mystleism which prevails over its realistic instincts, or combines with them in strange ways -witness more than one popular religious sect and many a national writer, such as Gogol, Dos toyefsky, and Tolstol. Between this spontaneous sadness and the kind of pessimism con spicuous in nihilism, it is easy to find a link. M. Leroy Beaulieu would define nihilism a

simply the Russian form of the negative and revolutionary spirit of theage. Far from being a disease peculiar to Russia, it is a moral epidemic of which the germ has been imported, and with which all Europe, nay, the whole civilized world, is more or less affected: only the symptoms and the consequences of the malady vary with each people, according to the patient's age, constitution, and habits. If, in the low plains of the Neva or the Volga. the attacks of this revolutionary fever have nowadays become endemic, and offer peculiar symptoms, that is due to the people's idioavnracies, and also to their diet. According to our author, few designations have lent themselves to more misunderstandings than this term "Nihilism." which, in reality, is only a witty nickname, invented by Turguenief, but disowned by he greater part of those to whom it is applied. The word has changed its meaning three or four times, or, rather, this contemptuous appellation has been successively attached to different doctrines or tendencies, naturally however, connected with one another by a more or less direct affiliation. M. Leroy Beaulieu would distinguish three phases, or, so to speak, three stages and metamorphoses. It the first acceptation of the term, nihilism was untinged with politics; it signified little more than a certain way of comporting one's self, of thinking and talking-a mannerism, a fashion or, as one might say, an attitude or pose, that came into favor among young people between 1860 and 1870, especially among the younger graduates at the university, and the girl stuents with cropped hair, residing abroad or in the provinces. The designation was pointed at a spirit of revolt against received ideas and our rent conventionalities, against all traditional authorities, and antiquated, religious or political dogmas-a spirit of negation, in fine stamped with an intolerant materialism and naive radicalism; nothing more at bottom than a violent reaction of the Russian soul against the system of government and the intellectual yoke under which it had long been bent. This was the first, and, properly speaking, the true nihitism which has been depicted in immortal strokes by the most famous Russian novelists After this theoretical and abstract nihilism. frequently dabbled in by amateurs, and at times entirely made up of posing and outward show, and which, moreover, did not attempt to carry out its maxims, except in individual life and private relations, there came into being about 1871, under the twofold influ ence of the Paris Commune and the Interna nional, a nihilism all action and agitation transformed into a militant socialism which strove to spread its ideas among the people—a nihilism already devoted to politics and revolution, having recourse to association and secret propagandism, though not as yet to plots and murder. It was only after several years of disappointment and bitterness, toward 1877-78 that this peaceably preaching nihilism, meta morphosed into a violent party seeking redras from conspiracy and assassination, took up for its weapon dynamite, and for its watchword terror. Under the threefold aspect of speculative radicalism, socialistic apostolate, and re-volutionary terrorism, this third form of nihilism has shed on the Russian temperament a powerful illumination, as of the electric light. It has laid bare a power of logic as to intellect a force of will as to character, a capacity for passion, fanaticism, stubbornness, and selfdevotion which might be matched among those religious sects of the West which have sought their votaries among the lowly, bu which, as they are exhibited in civilized Russians, have been to Europe a revelation.

We have received from the Messrs. Scribner

new life of Joan of Arc, by Lord RONALL

Gowen. This blography does not profess to be the outcome of investigation at first hand. but it makes known to English readers the resuits of the researches of Quicherat, Wallon and Fabre. Especially is the author indebted to Fabre, who has published a French transla tion of the original Latin text of the reports of the two trials concerning the Maid of Orleans that namely in which she was condemned at Rouen in 1431, and that by which her memery was rehabilitated twenty-five years later. The book is written in a spirit curiously at variance with the tendency of our time to apply scientific tests to the supernatural phenomena popularly associated with Joan of Arc. Moreover the author seems to lack the historical sense which would have enabled him to comprehend the attitude of eredulity characteristic alike of the Maid's accusers and defenders. It mattered not whether men were partisans of the French or English claimant of the French crown: neither did it matter whether they were ecclesiastics or laymen; all, withou exception, believed either that the Maid of Orleans was a deliberate impostor, affirming he thing that was not; or else, admitting that the so-called "voices" were really heard by ner: she was the instrument or victim of some supernatural intelligence which should be worshipped as angelic, or abhorred as demoniacal, according to the prepossessions and in-terests of the onlookers. A modern pathologist reviewing all the incidents of her career would probably be led to the conclusion that Joan of Arc suffered from hallucinations, or, to use the latest phrase, was possessed of the power of hypnotizing herself through auto-suggestion. Some such hypothesis would render her story intelligible without impugning her honesty or making her the channel of supernatural communications. But, of course, in 1430 no one could take any such view of her declaration. In the House and Paris of that time it seemed indisputable that, if not an romanticlem which had its brief day, like the impostor, she must be either the mouthpiece classicism which preceded it, were importa- of a heavenly message or the medium of

Satanic witcheraft. It was really no more discreditable to the English and Burgundian fac-tions to maintain the one theory than it was to the champions of the Dauphin, afterward Charles VII., to uphold the other.

The author of this blography brings out clearly enough the fact, sometimes overlooked, that it was not by a secular, but an ecclesiastical tribunal that she was condemned. Perhaps more emphasis might have been laid, however, on the fact that the prelates and clergy. by whom the Maid of Orleans was tried, were almost exclusively French, and, therefore, whatever odlum attaches to her sentence must rest mainly on her own countrymen. In the long list of bishops, mitred abbots, priors, canons, and doctors of the University of Paris who constituted her judges, only two English names are to be found. The Cardinal of Winchester never once appeared during the proceedings. That the immediate guard of the prisoner was composed of English soldiers was a matter of course, inasmuch as Rouen was occupied by the English forces. A point to be noted is that. before passing sentence, the ecclesiastical tribunal at Rouen submitted six queries to the University of Paris. Every one of these queries was answered by the theologians in a way unfavorable to the interests of the accused. Not only was it a French prince, the Duke of Burgundy, who delivered Joan of Arc to the Inquisition; not only were they French eccleslastles who condemned her; but no steps seem to have been taken by Charles the Dauphin, afterward Charles VII., to rescue her, or to get her exchanged for any other prisoner or risoners. Although more than a year elapsed between her capture and her execution, he made not a sign in her behalf. In the documents of the time there exists not a trace of any negotiation or of any wish to effect her release. Later, indeed, when almost the whole of France had been recovered. Charles became anxious on his own account that his coronation at Rheims should not be imputed to the

actions and to the aid of one whom the French clergy and French judges had condemned and executed as a heretic and apostate. Hence he set on foot a vast judicial inquiry to vindicate the fame of her whose condemnation had been formally pronounced in the name of the Five years elapsed, however, before the assent of the Papacy to a rehearing of the cause could be obtained. Pour Nicolas V. refused to sanction the King's purpose, and it was not until after the accession of Calixtus III, that proceedings for the rehabilitation of the Maid of Orleans were begun. By the judges who directed these proceedings it was deemed indispensable to prove that Joan of Arc was a person of stainless purity of body as well as mind, and accordingly a great deal of evidence was brought forward to demonstrate that she was incontestably a virgin. It was reserved for a countryman of Joan of Arc's (Du Bellay) to invent a legend to disprove the fact, and, to the shame of French literature, Voltaire adopted the calumny in his licentious burlesque-heroic poem, "La Pucelle d'Or-As regards the two trials to which we have referred, that which resulted in the conviction of the Maid of Orleans and that which ended in her rehabilitation, seem equally unworthy of respect. In 1431 the clergy of France, to please the English claimant of the crown, had, in the name of orthodoxy, and with the tolerance of a Pope, denounced Joan of Arc as a heretic and idolatress. In 1456 the French clergy, to please Charles VII., and again with the tolerance of the Pope, pronounced the memory of Joan of Arc free from all taint of heresy and idolatry.

An appendix to this book contains some interesting data relating to the views taken of Joan of Are in French and English history. It is well known that Monstrelet zealously at tacks the Maid, or rather her mission. But Monstrelet was on the English side. Even in the sixteenth century, a French chronicler, Haillon, wrote disparagingly of the heroine This called forth the publication of a book by the magistrates of Orleans, the preface of which records the "lamentable fact that the Maid, respected by all other nations, the English alone excepted, findsamong her country. men writings to injure her memory by people who are greater enemies to the honor of France than those who are strangers to their country." Sismondi, in his history of France published be tween 1821 and 1844, sums up the facts in these brief words: "The Church was against the Maid. All persons not delegated by her who pretended to have supernatural powers were accused of using magical arts." Michelet, in the chapter of his history of France which is levoted to Joan of Arc. attacks the entire English nation as if they had been individually and collectively guilty of the Maid's death. It is true, indeed, that English broniclers were, for a long time her. Fabyan heaped upon her the most scurrilous abuse, and Hall and Hollinshed sinned as deeply. Even Thomas Fuller does not seem to have been able to make up his mind whether foan of Are was a witch or a heroine. It is well known with what contempt the Maid of Orleans is treated in the First Part of King Henry VI., but whether Shakespeare is the author of that play, or, at all events, of those portions of it in which Joan of Are appears, may be disputable. Nothing, however, in that play, or in any English chronicle can be compared with the abuse and filth with which her own countryman. Voltaire, bespattered the memory of the Maid of Orleans. As for Schiller's play, the "Jungfrau von Orleans." It is historically a mere travesty of the life and death of the heroine.

SALISBURY AND THE FENIANS. Their Widely Different Grounds of Appre-

beasion Respecting Home Rule. TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN-Sir: The differ ence between the Tory terror of homo rule and the Fenian fear of the same measure is decidedly striking. Statesmen cannot always regard things in the same light. Lord Salisbury. n the Pall Mall Gazette, expresses his apprehension with considerable candor. "In the event of war between Great Britain and another power." he says. "an unfriendly executive in Ireland could cause untold distress by allowing an enemy to procure coal and prorisions in Irish ports, and by allowing the coast to be used as a rendezvous for privateers. The traditional hatred will impel the Irish to fully use against England any advantage they may secure."

In other words, home rule would be an advantage, and consequently the Irish should not receive it. But it was only the other day that Salisbury and his friends were preaching about the great disadvantages to the Irish that the "mischievous measure" was full of. Peo-ple may be inclined to fancy that the noble Lord argues like a man with a bad conscience. At all events, he is candid enough to admit that he is afraid. But that "traditional hatred" of which he is so much in dread is precisely the microbe which Dr. Gladstone proposes to destroy by the home rule treatment.

It must not be forgotten that there are extremists still in Ireland, men who stick to the "traditional hatred." Is it likely that their numbers will be reduced by the rejection of the Home Rule bill? Not at all. On the contrary, it is very probable that the people, giving up all hope of any benefit from parliamentary agitation, might be disposed to "use against England any advantage they might secure" in the way of assistance from a foreign power at war with the traditional enemy. There is still some fighting material in Ireland which perhaps the power or powers at war with England might be disposed to utilize. A little France-Russian assistance to the men who cherish the "traditional hatred" might cause more "unteld distress" than could be wrought by any "unfriendly executive in Ireland."

But, be this ag it may, the difference between Lord Salisbury's opposition to the measure and the Fenian opposition to the measure and the Fenian opposition to it is somewhat funny. The extremists, or, in plain language, the rebels, are afraid of home rule because it might tend to tranquilize the people; and they would prefer to have the country ruled as it is than to see it won over completely to England by any legislative enactment however just and concillatory.

Once upon a time two men saw a ghest. One was an Irishman and the other an Englishman. "Look at him, Pat." gasped the latter. "he comes in the form of a dragon!" Worse than that, John." exclaimed Pat, "he's in the shape of a drove of pigs!" England any advantage they might secure

USEFUL IS THE BAMBOO. Tankee Machinery Can Work it Up as Well as dapanese Fingers,

The light bamboo curtain is giving the same privacy to suburban New Yorkers this year that the Venetian blind has long given to West Indians and other dwellers in warm climates. Several years ago these rolling curtains of split bamboo made their appearance in this city under the name of Sidarris, and they were found so useful that they soon became popular favorites, particularly in the suburban towns. The suburban New Yorker had fallen into the habit of living much in pubhouse. Fashion decreed long ago that the front fence must come down, and the plazza, usually not far from the street, was so exposed that it was useless for comfortable lounging, and demanded the same dress that must be word for walking or calling. bamboo curtain came to remedy this evil, and to give to the American plazza greater privacy and comfort: It is cheap enough for the small est cottage, pretty enough for the most expensive, and useful for everybody who has a piazza. Like most things that are cheap, pretty, and useful, it has made a place for itself. Possibly there may be some remote hamlet in the United States where the bamboo curtain has not yet appeared, and for the benefit of that hamlet it may be necessary to describe it. It is simply a rolling shade made of thin strips of split bamboo, with a round bamboo rod at top and bottom to give it strength, and ropes

running through two small pullers to raise it or let if down. It is so loosely made that the wind whistlost through it readily, yet it has enough solidity to make a shield from the sun. It may be run up or down as easily as any shade, and it is not only a protection against the sun. It is used only upon the plazza.

The bamboo curtain is too familiar hereaby the sun of the sun to the sun too familiar hereaby the sun to make the sun to sun ger from the gaze of very assert the sun to make from the plazza.

The bamboo curtain is too familiar hereabouts to need any description for the New Yorker, urban or suburban; but there are some curious things about it that must attract the idle notice of the summer iounger. It has a foreign look throughout, and seems to bear the felicate odors of incuper and fine cabinet work that we associate with Japan. The slats are tiny things, perhaps a quarter of an inch wide and a sixteentil of an inch thick. Wherever the marks of a joint appear, they are the summer of the summer of

bend when steamed, its unique property of splitting into pieces of any thickness desired, and the high polish it will take. For any of these qualities no other wood compares with it is out out to light a the joints are only from the polish it will take. For any of the good according to the property of the more cert faints are rare and are used only in the manufacture of the more coety furniture.

"What bamboo articles do we make? A great many, and still not nearly as many as we might nor as many as we probably shall when Americans come to know hamboo better. Services, and the property of the propert